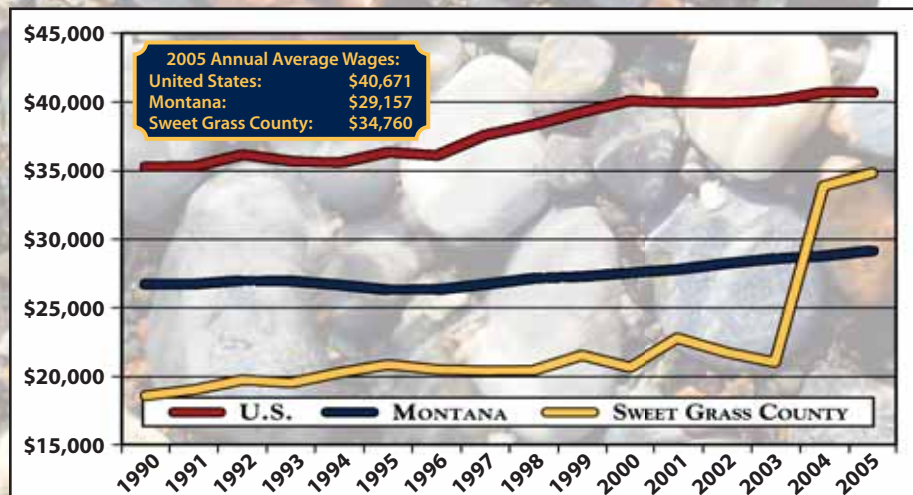


## Annual Average Labor Force - Sweet Grass County

Year	Civilian Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Unemployment Rate
2005	2,806	2,751	55	2.0%
2004	2,666	2,611	55	2.1%
2003	2,281	2,227	54	2.4%
2002	2,144	2,079	65	3.0%
2001	2,050	1,990	60	2.9%
2000	1,989	1,928	61	3.0%

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Local Area Unemployment Statistics Program (LAUS)

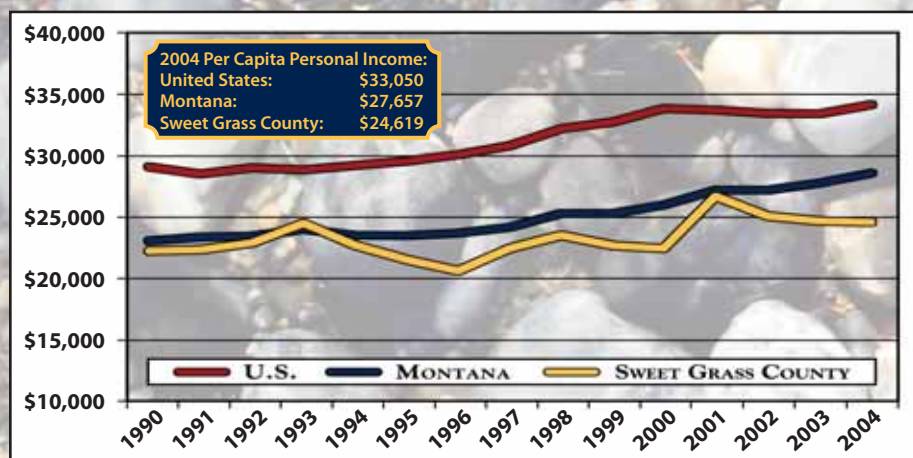
## Annual Average Wages, 1990 to 2005 (In 2005 Dollars)



Note: The 2003-2004 shift in average annual wage is due to changes in the legal location of a business and does not reflect an actual economic shift in the Sweet Grass economy.

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program (QCEW)

## Per Capita Personal Income, 1990 to 2004 (In 2005 Dollars)



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, Regional Economic Information System

## Demographic & Economic Information for Sweet Grass County

Photo courtesy of [MontanaPictures.net](http://MontanaPictures.net)



**RESEARCH & ANALYSIS BUREAU**

Research & Analysis Bureau - Montana Department of Labor & Industry  
 P.O. Box 1728 - Helena, MT 59624-1728 - Ph: (406) 444-2430  
 or Toll-free: (800) 541-3904 - Fax: (406) 444-2638  
 E-mail: [webmasterrad@mt.gov](mailto:webmasterrad@mt.gov) - Website: [www.ourfactyourfuture.org](http://www.ourfactyourfuture.org)



Census and Economic Information Center - Montana Department of Commerce  
 P.O. Box 200505 - Helena, MT 59620-0505 - Ph: (406) 841-2740 - Fax: (406) 841-2731  
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## SWEET GRASS COUNTY

Sweet Grass County is Montana's thirty-ninth most populous county, with an estimated 3,672 residents in 2005. Big Timber, the county seat, is the state's 43rd largest city, with a population estimated at 1,725 in 2005.<sup>1</sup> Other cities and towns in Sweet Grass County include Greycliff, McLeod, and Melville.

Sweet Grass County comprises 1,846 square miles of land, of which, 449 are public lands. With natural amenities such as the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness; the Absaroka, Beartooth, and Crazy Mountain Ranges; the Yellowstone and Boulder Rivers, and seven creeks providing ample fishing, hiking, and other outdoor recreation opportunities, Sweet Grass County is becoming a major draw for tourism.

Agriculture is prevalent throughout the eastern and northern sections of the county, where the primary livestock are cattle and sheep. The county ranks as Montana's 6th top producer of sheep and lambs, and 24th in cattle. Some crops are also raised, particularly those which require little moisture, such as hay, wheat, barley, and oats.<sup>2</sup>

Mining is one of Sweet Grass County's largest and fastest-growing industries. Recently, the Stillwater Complex acquired 137 lode claims covering 2,400 acres on Chrome Mountain. A Plan of Operations for exploration drilling has been approved by the Federal Forest Service, and the company intends to proceed with its exploratory drilling program.<sup>3</sup>

Mining was Sweet Grass County's number one industry subsector in terms of employment for 2005. Other significant subsectors included Retail Trade, Accommodation & Food Service, and Public Administration. Some of the fastest employment growth from 2004 to 2005 took place in the Finance & Insurance, Mining, Manufacturing, and Accommodation & Food Services subsectors<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program

<sup>2</sup>[www.comehomemontana.org/viewinfo.php?town=big\\_timber](http://www.comehomemontana.org/viewinfo.php?town=big_timber)

<sup>3</sup>[www.premiumexploration.com/montana.htm](http://www.premiumexploration.com/montana.htm)

<sup>4</sup>MT Dept. of Labor & Industry, Research & Analysis Bureau - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) Program

## Resources for Sweet Grass County

### Chambers of Commerce

Sweet Grass Chamber of Commerce  
P. O. Box 1012  
Big Timber, MT 59011  
Phone: (406) 932-5131  
E-mail: [info@bigtimber.com](mailto:info@bigtimber.com)  
Website: [www.bigtimber.com](http://www.bigtimber.com)

### Newspapers

Big Timber Pioneer  
P. O. Box 190  
Big Timber, MT 59011  
Ph:(406) 932-5298  
E-mail: [pioreporter@yahoo.com](mailto:pioreporter@yahoo.com)

### Economic Development

Sweet Grass County Opportunities  
P. O. Box 1385  
Big Timber, MT 59011  
Ph: (406) 932-5470

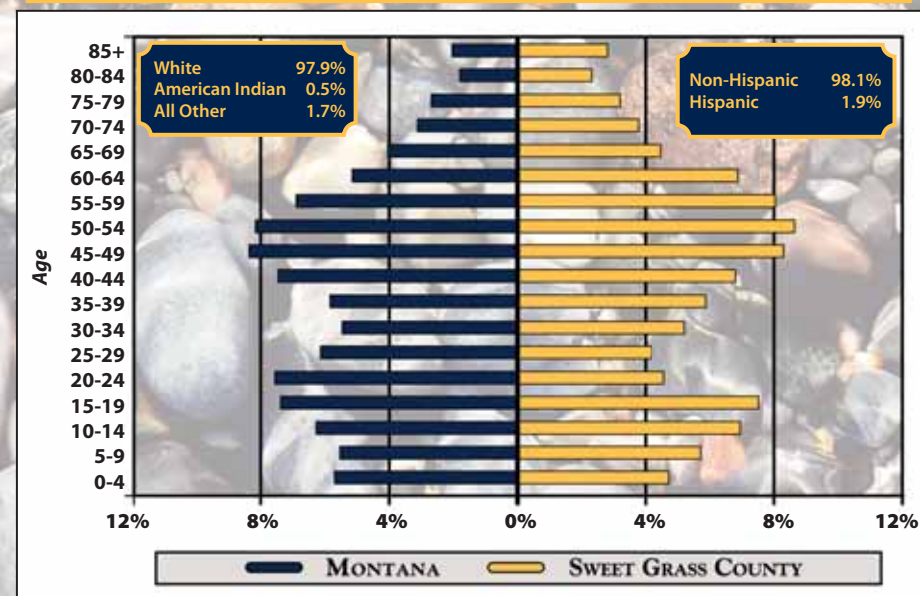
Montana State University-Bozeman  
Extension Service-Sweet Grass County  
P. O. Box 640, Big Timber, MT 59011-0640  
Ph:(406) 932-5146, Fax:(406) 932-5112  
E-mail: [acxmk@montana.edu](mailto:acxmk@montana.edu)

## Population for Sweet Grass County & Related Areas

Geography	Total Population					
	Census	Estimates				
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Montana	902,195	906,098	910,395	917,885	926,920	935,670
Sweet Grass County	3,609	3,606	3,623	3,615	3,697	3,672
Big Timber	1,650	1,679	1,704	1,702	1,744	1,725
Balance of Sweet Grass County	1,959	1,927	1,919	1,913	1,953	1,947

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates Program

## Distribution of Population by Age Montana and Sweet Grass County, 2005



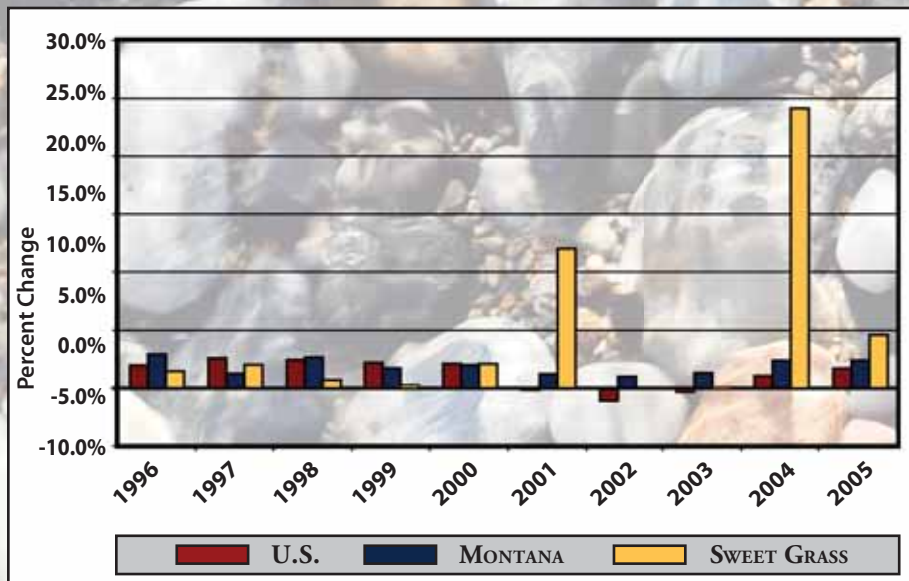
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005 Population Estimates

## Highest Level of Educational Attainment (Population 25 years and older)

Educational Attainment	Sweet Grass County	Montana	U.S.
Less than High School Diploma	11.1%	12.8%	19.6%
High School Diploma (or equivalent)	35.4%	31.3%	28.6%
Some College	24.4%	25.6%	21.0%
Associate Degree	5.5%	5.9%	6.3%
Bachelor's Degree	18.4%	17.2%	15.5%
Master's Degree	3.3%	4.6%	5.9%
Professional Degree	1.4%	1.7%	2.0%
Doctoral Degree	0.5%	0.9%	1.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

## Percent Change in Employment: 1996 to 2005 U.S., Montana, and Sweet Grass County



Note: The 2003-2004 shift in employment is due to changes in the legal location of a business and does not reflect an actual economic shift in the Sweet Grass economy.

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program (QCEW)

## Top 10 Private Employers in Sweet Grass County (Based on 2nd Quarter 2006 Data - Listed in Alphabetical Order)

Business Name	Size Class	Business Name	Size Class
Big T IGA	4	The Grand Hotel & Restaurant	4
Big Timber Super 8 Motel	4	Sharps Rifles-Shiloh Rifle Manufacturing Company	4
Big Timber Waterslide	4	Stetson Ford	4
Country Skillet Restaurant	4	Stillwater Mining	7
Frosty Freeze	4	Tom Roe & Son Construction	4

Employment Size Class Coding: Class 9 = 1000+ employees, Class 8 = 500 to 999 employees, Class 7 = 250 to 499 employees, Class 6 = 100 to 249 employees, Class 5 = 50 to 99 employees, Class 4 = 20 to 49 employees, Class 3 = 10 to 19 employees

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program (QCEW) This list includes ONLY private industry employers subject to unemployment insurance. Railroads and government agencies are excluded.

## Agricultural Statistics - Sweet Grass County

### Farms

<b>Farms: (number)</b>	357
Land in farms (acres)	867,058
Average size of farms (acres)	2,429
<b>Farms by size: (number)</b>	
Less than 1,000 acres	208
1,000 acres or more	149
<b>Farms by value of products sold and government payments received: (number)</b>	
Less than \$100,000	312
\$100,000 or more	45
<b>Farms by type of organization: (number)</b>	
Family, Individual, Partnership	318
Corporation, Cooperative, Trust	39

### Livestock Inventory and Crops Harvested

<b>Livestock and Poultry Inventory (number)</b>	
Cattle and calves	39,093
Hogs and pigs	37
Sheep and lambs	8,705
Horses and ponies	1,823
Bison	-
Chickens (layers and broilers)	561
<b>Crops Harvested (acres)</b>	
Corn for grain	(D)
Corn for silage or greenchop	-
Wheat for grain, All	2,847
Winter wheat for grain	(D)
Durum wheat for grain	(D)
Spring wheat for grain	-
Barley for grain	2,691
Oats for grain	1,358
Sunflower seed, All	-
Soybeans for beans	-
Hay, haylage, grass silage	46,165

### Operator Demographics

<b>Primary occupation: (number)</b>	
Farming	205
Other	152
<b>Place of residence: (number)</b>	
On farm operated	289
Not on farm operated	68
<b>Years on present farm: (number)</b>	
Less than 10 years	103
10 years or more	254
<b>Age group: (number)</b>	
Under 55 years	182
55 years and over	175
<b>Average age of operators: (number)</b>	55.2

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service, 2002  
(D) - Not Disclosable



# Employment by Industry - Annual Averages 2005 - Sweet Grass County

Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Annual Employment	Annual Wages Per Job
TOTAL ALL INDUSTRIES	192	1,597	\$34,687
TOTAL PRIVATE	169	1,232	\$38,080
AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY, FISHING & HUNTING	14	57	\$22,273
Crop production	3	*	*
Animal production	10	40	\$24,203
Agriculture & forestry support	1	*	*
MINING	2	*	*
Mining, except oil and gas	2	447	\$69,242
UTILITIES	1	*	*
CONSTRUCTION	33	110	\$28,999
Construction of buildings	18	50	\$30,251
Heavy and civil engineering construction	1	*	*
Specialty trade contractors	15	*	*
MANUFACTURING	11	61	\$27,493
Food manufacturing	3	9	\$10,990
Wood product manufacturing	1	*	*
Nonmetallic mineral product mfg	2	*	*
Fabricated metal product manufacturing	4	40	\$31,419
Transportation equipment manufacturing	1	*	*
WHOLESALE TRADE	5	25	\$24,384
Merchant wholesalers, durable goods	2	*	*
Merchant wholesalers, nondurable goods	3	*	*
RETAIL TRADE	25	175	\$19,758
Motor vehicle and parts dealers	5	46	\$29,967
Furniture and home furnishings stores	1	*	*
Electronics and appliance stores	1	*	*
Building material & garden supply stores	2	*	*
Food and beverage stores	2	*	*
Health and personal care stores	1	*	*
Gasoline stations	3	*	*
Clothing and clothing accessories stores	3	12	\$7,240
Sporting good, hobby, book, music stores	2	*	*
Miscellaneous store retailers	5	5	\$8,304
TRANSPORTATION AND WAREHOUSING	2	*	*

Industry	Number of Establishments	Average Annual Employment	Annual Wages Per Job
Truck transportation	2	*	*
INFORMATION	4	14	\$7,562
Publishing industries, except Internet	2	*	*
Motion picture, sound recording industry	1	*	*
ISPs, search portals, & data processing	1	*	*
FINANCE AND INSURANCE	5	31	\$29,654
Credit intermediation & related activity	3	*	*
Insurance carriers & related activities	2	*	*
REAL ESTATE AND RENTAL AND LEASING	7	13	\$22,924
Real estate	5	*	*
Rental and leasing services	2	*	*
PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL SERVICES	13	44	\$29,292
MANAGEMENT OF COMPANIES AND ENTERPRISES	1	*	*
ADMINISTRATIVE AND WASTE SERVICES	2	*	*
Administrative and support services	1	*	*
Waste management and remediation service	1	*	*
HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL ASSISTANCE	5	12	\$16,991
Ambulatory health care services	3	*	*
Social assistance	2	*	*
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, AND RECREATION	11	42	\$8,668
Museums, historical sites, zoos, & parks	1	*	*
Amusements, gambling, and recreation	10	*	*
ACCOMMODATION AND FOOD SERVICES	18	163	\$10,461
Accommodation	8	30	\$17,617
Food services and drinking places	10	134	\$8,883
OTHER SERVICES	11	25	\$13,558
Repair and maintenance	3	7	\$26,055
Personal and laundry services	1	*	*
Membership associations & organizations	6	16	\$6,920
Private households	1	*	*
TOTAL GOVERNMENT	23	365	\$23,228
Local Government	9	307	\$20,261
State Government	7	22	\$35,934
Federal Government	7	36	\$40,607

Source: Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages Program (QCEW)  
 \* Data Not Disclosable

The QCEW program compiles data reported by all employers covered under Montana unemployment insurance.  
 (Totals may not add due to nondisclosure of confidential industry data or to rounding.)